Simplification of Borrowing Procedure for Farmers

3894. SHRI AHMED PATEL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that credit flow from public sector banks to farmers is suffering due to irritant procedure and quite a large number of formalities required before the loan is sanctioned resulting in farmers preferring moneylenders to Banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government propose to take for the simplification of application forms for Bank loans to farmers and minimize the formalities to enable the farmers to take loan from Banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) To give an impetus to the flow of credit to agriculture, RBI had set up a High Level Committee (R. V. Gupta Committee) to suggest measures for improving credit delivery system as well as simplification of procedure for agricultural credit. The Committee submitted its report in April, 1998. RBI advised all commercial banks to introduce simplified loan application forms. Most banks have already introduced simplified agricultural loan application forms while the others are in the process of implementing the same. More power has been delegated to branch managers for speedier sanctions. Insistence on no-dues certificate has been left to the banks and no security/margin is now required for agricultural loans upto Rs. 10,000/-. It is expected that these steps would enable the banks to minimize formalities and help the farmers to take loans from banks easily.

Exemption of Sardar Sarovar Project from Import Duty

3895. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the River Bed Power House of Sardar Sarovar Project is fulfilling the required criteria for inclusion in the list of projects specially exempted from payment of import duty;

(b) if so, whether Government of Gujarat has requested the Central Government for including this project in the said list;

(c) if so, the reasons for its non-inclusion in the list so far; and

(d) by when it shall be included?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR) : (a) Under the revised mega power policy announced by the Government of India in November, 1998, certain power project sites have been identified as mega power projects for development as multi-state mega power projects, both in the public as well as private sector. The identified mega power projects are being given certain fiscal concessions, which *inter-alia*, includes exemption from payment of customs duty on import of capital equipment for these projects. Apart from the projects already identified for such concessions, Government has not decided to include any more projects for grant of the fiscal concession and also, no criteria has been laid down for including more projects in future. The River Bed Power House of Sardar Sarovar Project has not been included in the list of identified mega power projects and notified for grant of the said fiscal concessions.

(b) The River Bed Power House of Sardar Sarovar Project is not eligible for exemption from payment of import duty as it is not included in the list of identified mega power projects. Government of Gujarat have been requesting for exemption from customs duty for import of Turbine Generator sets for the above project on the lines of mega power project being developed under the revised mega power policy.

(c) and (d) As stated above, the list of identified mega power projects does not include the River Bed Power House of Sardar Sarovar Project, which is an ongoing project. The revised mega power policy also does not provide for inclusion of such ongoing projects.

SEBI Report on Payments to Brokers for Rigging Stock/Share Prices

3896. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that SEBI had sent a detailed report to Government about the payments made to the brokers by certain firms to rig up its stock/ share prices;